Bishop Creek Hydroelectric System,
Plant 4, Worker Cottage
(Building No.106)
Bishop Creek
Bishop Vicinity
Inyo County
California

HAER No. CA-145-4-E

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California

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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

Bishop Creek Hydroelectric System, Plant 4 **HAER No. CA-145-4-E**
Worker Cottage, Building 106)
Bishop Creek
Bishop Vicinity
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Location: Near Bishop Creek in North 1/2 of the Southeast 1/4 of Section 19, Township 7 South, Range 32 East, M.D.M, Inyo County, California (UTM 11/367115/4131690), in the eastern Sierra Nevada Mountains approximately 2.5 miles southwest of the town of Bishop, California, and 225 air miles due north of Los Angeles.

Date of Construction: 1908, 1953

Builder: Nevada-California Power Cornpany

Present Owner: Southern California Edison Company
2244 Walnut Grove Avenue
Rosemead, CA 91770

Original Use: Worker Cottage

Present Use: Worker Cottage

Significance: Building 16, Plant 4 (formerly Building No. 7 Plant 4), a small Craftsman Style cottage, is the oldest permanently built residence at Plant 4. Its significance lies in its contribution to an understanding of the historic character of the physical and social environment of the Plant 4 compound. Built in 1905, Plant 4 was the first on the Bishop Creek System, and it remains the system's operating headquarters. The Bishop Creek System is considered significant for its role: (1) in the expansion of hydroelectric generation technology, (2) in the development of eastern California, and (3) in the development of long-distance power transmission and distribution.

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Environmental Affairs Division
Rosemead, CA 91770

Date: July 31, 1997

1. DESCRIPTION

Building 106, Plant 4 is a one-story-with-basement, wood-framed, rectangular-in-plan Craftsman Style cottage located about 270 feet northeast of the Bishop Creek Hydroelectric System Plant 4 powerhouse on the east side of the main Plant 4 residential street. This cottage was part of a residential enclave of 12 houses, many of which have now been demolished, where the Plant 4 workers lived (Photo 145-4-E-1). Building 106, constructed in 1908, is the oldest permanently built worker residence at Plant 4. For many years this house was occupied by the family of the powerhouse's chief operator. It has had major alterations from the original condition.

The house sits on a concrete foundation and is orientated northeast/southwest along its main axis, with the front entrance concealed behind a recessed, full-width, screened-in porch on the northeast end. The screened-in front porch is accessed through a door on the northwest side from the main Plant 4 residential street by way of a concrete walkway and steps (photos 145-4-E-2 and 145-4-E-3). The building 106 yard is lower than street level and is separated from the street by a low retaining wall. A second retaining wall divides the upper yard from the lower yard at the back or south end of the house (photos 145-4-E-4 and 145-4-E-5). The yard is dominated by a grass lawn; two mature trees between the house and the street, and a row of shrubs along the screened-in porch and walkway complete the landscaping.

In 1953, and shed-roofed addition was added to the back (southeast end) of the house (photo 145-4-E-6). This addition features aluminum-framed sliding-glass windows. The original portion of the house is pierced primarily by 2-light over 2-light, double-hung, wood-framed windows, and wood-framed casement windows in multiple arrangements with projecting sills (photo 145-4-E-7).

The medium-pitched, composition shingle covered, hipped-roof is finished with exposed rafter tails. Three of the four sides of the building, including the 1953 addition, have asbestos siding. The original exterior finish of the house (except the 1953 addition) was wood shingles. The fourth side of the house, the screened-in porch, retains the original wood shingle siding (photos 145-4-E-8 and 145-4-E-9).

The basement access is down a set of concrete stairs with welded-pipe handrails located on the northeast side of the house (photo 145-4-E-10). The basement mostly occupies the space under the screened-in porch (photo 145-4-E-11).

The rooms of the house open one to another without halls. The original paneled and glazed front door opens into the 13 x 14 foot living room (photo 145-4-E-12). This room features an unusual large 1-light sash-with-transom, wood-framed window on the northeast wall adjacent to two 2-light over 2-light, double-hung, wood-framed windows on the southeast wall (photo 145-4-E-13), a hardwood floor framed by a wide baseboard, an irregular west corner (photo 145-4-E-14), and decorative horizontal molding on the upper walls. A single ceiling fixture illuminates the room. An original panel door on the northwest wall opens to bedroom no. 1.

A wide entryway through the southwest wall connects the living room to the 9 x 13 foot dining room (photos 145-4-E-14 and 145-4-E-15). This room repeats the architectural pattern of the living room: hardwood floor framed by wide baseboard, a decorative horizontal molding on the upper walls, a 2-light over 2-light, double-hung, wood-framed window through the southeast wall, and an irregular south corner containing a recessed china cabinet (photo 145-4-E-16). Illumination is provided by a single ceiling fixture.

The remodeled 13 x 10 foot kitchen is accessed from the dining room (photo 145-4-E-17). This room features 1950s vintage built-in cabinetry, double sink (photo 145-4-E-18), linoleum flooring framed by wide baseboard, and decorative vertical wood stripping on the walls. A 2-light over 2-light, double-hung, wood-framed window pierces the southeast wall (photo 145-4-E-19). The kitchen is illuminated by a single ceiling fixture.

An original paneled and glazed door through the southwest kitchen wall leads to a 9 x 7 foot utility room (photo 145-4-E-20) that was added to the back of the house, along with the present bathroom, in 1953. The utility room contains the electrical junction boxes and plumbing for a washer. Narrow 2-light fixed windows in paired arrangement on both the southeast and southwest walls give an almost continual row of glazing across the south corner of the room (photo 145-4-E-21). A paneled and glazed door on the

southwest wall leads to the exterior. Flooring in the utility room is linoleum; illumination is provided by a single ceiling fixture.

The 11 x 9 foot bedroom no. 1, accessed from the living room, features a series of wood-framed casement windows around the north corner of the room (photo 145-4-E-22): two paired casements are grouped on the northwest wall, and two casements with a fixed middle window are grouped on the northeast wall. A walk-in closet on the southwest wall has been remodeled into a recessed closet with cabinets (photo 145-4-E-23). Flooring in bedroom no. 1 is wall-to-wall carpet. Illumination is provided by a single ceiling fixture.

The 10 x 13 foot bedroom no. 2 is accessed through an original panel door from the dining room (photo 145-4-E-24). A second door through the southwest wall leads to bedroom no. 3. A walk-in closet on the northwest wall has been remodeled into a recessed closet with cabinets (photo 145-4-E-25). A slight irregularity in the east corner reflects the back side of the west corner of the living room. A 2-light over 2-light, double-hung, wood-framed window pierces the northwest wall. Flooring is wall-to-wall carpet framed by a wide baseboard; illumination is provided by a single ceiling fixture.

The casement window arrangement around the east corner of bedroom no. 1 is repeated around the west corner of the 10 x 13 foot bedroom no. 3 (photo 145-4-E-26). A built-in closet/cabinet combination is located against the north corner. An original panel door on the southwest wall leads to the bathroom (photo 145-4-E-27). Flooring is wall-to-wall carpet; illumination is provided by a single ceiling fixture.

The 10 x 7 foot bathroom can be entered from the utility room as well as bedroom no. 3 (photo 145-4-E-28). The bathroom features built-in cabinets. An aluminum-frame sliding-glass window pierces the northwest wall above the shower/bath. Flooring is linoleum framed by a wide baseboard. A single ceiling fixture illuminates the room.

The project area is about five miles southwest of the town of Bishop, Inyo County, California. The Bishop Creek System is primarily located along the south, middle, and north forks of Bishop Creek on the steep eastern slopes of the southern Sierra Nevada Range. Plant 4 is one of five plants sited at varying elevations along Bishop Creek. Situated in the middle of the Bishop Creek

System, Plant 4 is northeast of Plants 2 and 3, and southwest of Plants 5 and 6.

II. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Please refer to the "Historical Context" section in the general Historic American Engineering Record for the Bishop Creek Hydroelectric System (HAER No. CA-145) for historical information regarding Bishop Creek Plant 4.

Each of the five Bishop Creek power plants, and Control Station, were originally developed with an associated residential complex occupied by operating and maintenance crews; all have now been removed with exception of small remaining enclaves at Plant 4, Control Station, and a single house at Plant 6. Building 106 is the oldest permanently built residence at Plant 4, and was, for many years, occupied by the family of the Plant 4 chief operator (Theodoratus Cultural Research 1988:A-84). The company development of employee living areas, especially at Plant 4, permitted comprehensive planning seldom seen in privately developed residential areas during this period. The setting of Building 106, Plant 4 still retains many elements of the old residential planning in this area, including picturesque curving streets, houses sited on terraces with stone retaining walls, manicured front lawns with unified groupings of shade trees, and integrally designed lighting standards.

III. SOURCES

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IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This Historic American Engineering Record documentation of Building 106, Plant 4, Bishop Creek Hydroelectric System, was undertaken because the building represents excess housing. SCE has automated the Bishop Creek power plants. Automation of the power plants has made it unnecessary to have on-site crews, thus, residential units like this cottage have become obsolete.

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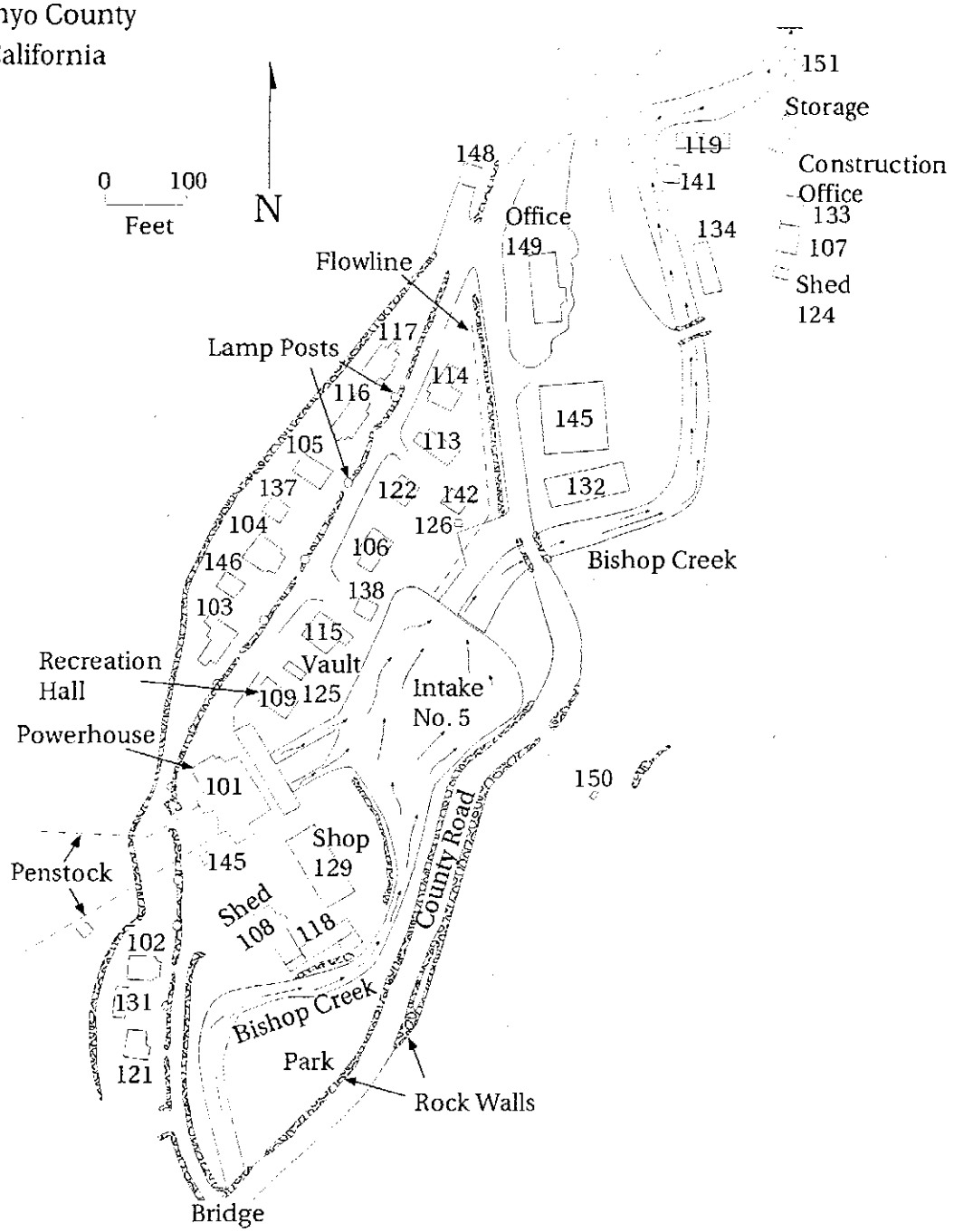

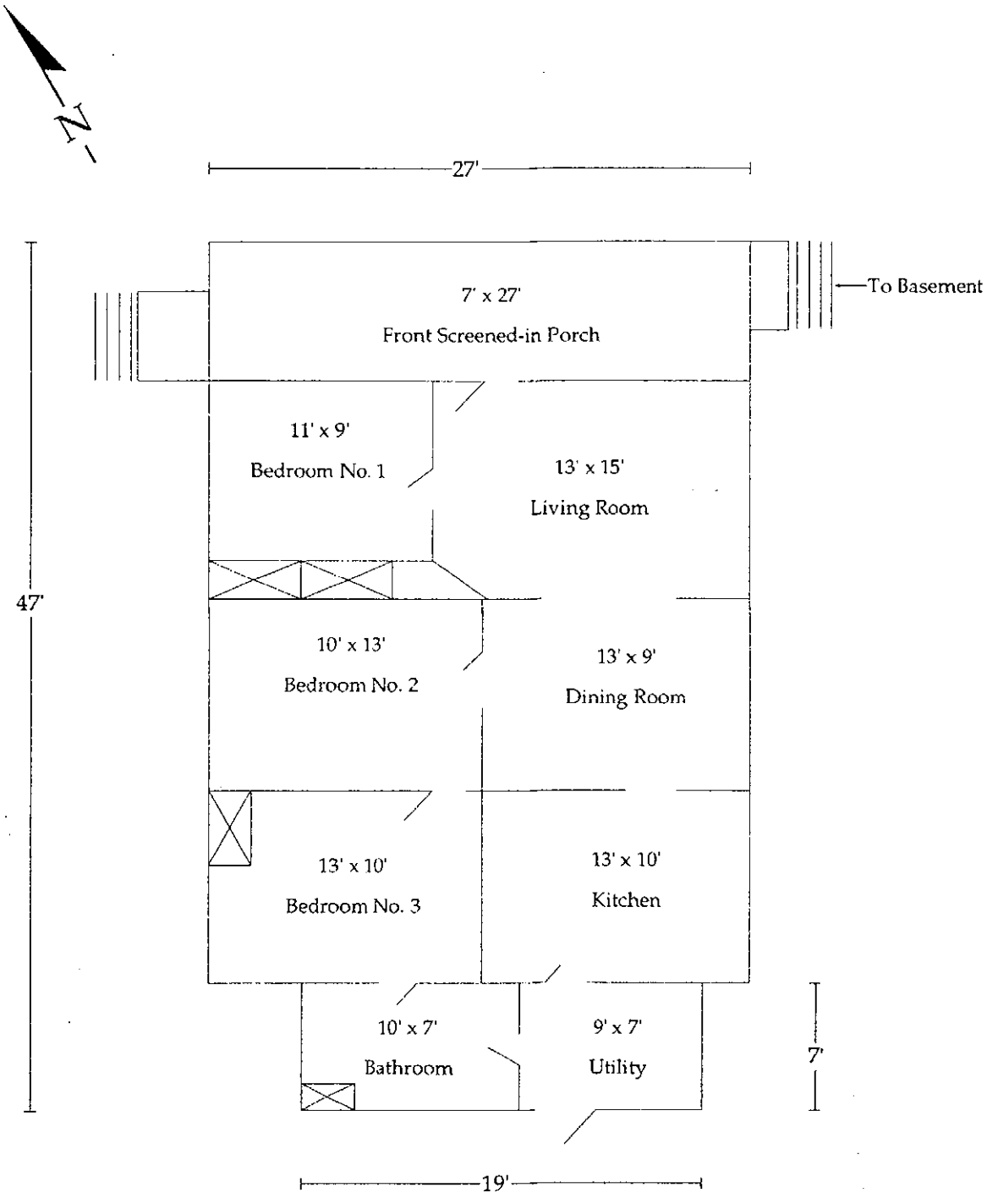
N
27'
47'
7' x 27'
Front Screened-in Porch
To Basement
11' x 9'
Bedroom No. 1
13' x 15'
Living Room
10' x 13'
Bedroom No. 2
13' x 9'
Dining Room
13' x 10'
Bedroom No. 3
13' x 10'
Kitchen
10' x 7'
Bathroom
9' x 7'
Utility
7'
19'